

## ACRONYMS TO REMEMBER USES OF PRETERITE & IMPERFECT

### THE PRETERITE: S.A.F.E.

- **S**pecific instance or a number of/several instances
  - *Le llamó tres veces. El me llamó ayer.*
  - He called him three times. He called me yesterday.
- **A**ction that interrupts ongoing events
  - *Yo trabajaba cuando mi amiga llamó.*
  - I was working when my friend called.
- **F**ocus on beginning or ending of action
  - *Empezó a llover.*
  - It started to rain.
- **E**nclosed amount of time
  - *Los árabes controlaron mucho de España por más de 700 años.*
  - The Arabs controlled much of Spain for over 700 years.

### THE IMPERFECT: W.A.T.E.R.S.

- **W**eather
  - *Llovía.*
  - It was raining.
- **A**ge
  - *Cuando tenía tres años, quería ser bombera.*
  - When I was three, I wanted to be a firefighter.
- **T**ime
  - *Eran las cuatro.*
  - It was four o'clock.
- **E**motion
  - *Estaba triste.*
  - I was sad.
- **R**epetition
  - *Yo visitaba a mi abuela de vez en cuando.*
  - I used to visit my grandmother from time to time.
- **S**etting or description  
(Answers the questions: **What was happening? What was ... like?\*)**
  - *El sol brillaba y la vista era bonita.*
  - The sun was shining and the view was pretty.  
\*(**What was happening?** –The sun was shining.)  
\*(**What was the view like?** –It was pretty.)

# SAFE WATERS: El Pretérito versus El Imperfecto

**SAFE:** When to use the preterite?

When you want to say that you **DID** or \_\_\_\_\_ed something. Also, when you want to talk about a Specific instance, an Action that interrupts an ongoing event, Focus on the beginning/ending of an action or an Enclosed amount of time. **SNAP SHOT CAMERA!!!**

Common words: ayer, anoche, el año pasado, el mes pasado, una vez, etc.

**WATERS:** When to use the imperfect?

When you want to say you **USED TO** do something or **WAS/WERE + ING** something in the past. Also, when you want to talk about Weather, Age, Time, Emotion, Repetition or Setting/description in the past. **VIDEO CAMERA!!!**

Common words: muchas veces, todos los días, siempre, cada día (semana, año), etc.